

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2026

Legislative Document

No. 2064

S.P. 853

In Senate, December 17, 2025

An Act to Expand Access to Early Childhood Nutrition by Establishing a Grant Program for Public Preschools

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on December 15, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D M Grant", is positioned above the printed name of the Secretary of the Senate.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by President DAUGHTRY of Cumberland.

Cosponsored by Senators: INGWERSEN of York, PIERCE of Cumberland, RAFFERTY of York, Representatives: EATON of Deer Isle, MURPHY of Scarborough, SALISBURY of Westbrook.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §24052, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 450, §11, is amended by amending the section headnote to read:

§24052. Duties; early childhood nutrition grant program administration

Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §24052, sub-§2 is enacted to read:

2. Early childhood nutrition grant program. The council shall create and administer, with input from the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services and the Department of Education, a grant program to allow school administrative units to enter into agreements with providers of public preschool programs to provide students in those programs with breakfast, lunch and a snack.

A. The council shall develop eligibility standards and requirements for participation in the grant program, including, but not limited to:

(1) The public preschool program is not located on the site of a public school, as defined in Title 20-A, section 1, subsection 24;

(2) The public preschool program meets the Department of Education's basic approval standards for public preschool under the Department of Education's rule Chapter 124: Basic Approval Standards: Public Preschool Programs; and

(3) The public preschool program shall provide food that meets the nutrition standards developed for child care centers pursuant to 42 United States Code, Section 1766 and administered by the Department of Education, child and adult care food program.

B. Grants may be awarded by the council as follows.

(1) The amount of the grant is limited to \$1,200 per student annually.

(2) In addition to the grant under subparagraph (1), an eligible public preschool program may apply for an additional grant of no more than \$10,000 for infrastructure improvements to allow the public preschool program to provide breakfast, lunch and a snack.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Maine Children's Cabinet Early Childhood Advisory Council, with input from the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services and the Department of Education, to establish and administer a grant program to allow school administrative units to enter into agreements with providers of off-site public preschool programs to provide students in those programs with breakfast, lunch and a snack. The grant is limited to \$1,200 per student per year, but an eligible program may apply for an additional grant of up to \$10,000 for infrastructure improvements to allow the program to provide breakfast, lunch and a snack. The food provided by the public preschool program must meet certain nutrition standards.